



Congressman

Ben Cardin

Reports From Washington

SUMMER 2006

THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, MARYLAND

Dear Friends,

One of the most serious economic challenges facing our nation right now is our soaring trade deficit. Last year it was a whopping \$724 billion, and this year it is likely to be even higher.

Such high trade deficits harm American workers and businesses and make us increasingly vulnerable to foreign ownership of U.S. assets.

There are laws and trade agreements in place that should protect us from unfair trading practices. Unfortunately, many of these agreements are not being enforced. That needs to change – we must hold our trading partners accountable for unfair trading practices that harm Americans.

As the senior Democrat on the House Trade Subcommittee, I am committed to ensuring that we have an aggressive trade policy that uses every tool at our disposal to open foreign markets so that U.S. products can compete fairly on a level playing field.

This Newsletter also contains a questionnaire that I hope you will take the time to complete.

Best wishes,

If “Our Children Are Our Future” Where’s the Funding?

It’s easy to say “our children are our future,” but our nation is not doing enough to ensure our children can compete in the 21st Century. Consider this troubling fact: To date we’ve spent approximately \$250 billion on the war in Iraq, yet we’ve underfunded the **No Child Left Behind Act** (NCLB) by roughly \$40 billion since 2002.

Unfortunately, cuts to education remain a part of the Administration’s budget. If this year’s budget is enacted, over a five-year period Maryland will lose \$54.7 million for school improvement programs, \$93.4 million for special education; \$113.9 million for vocational education programs, and the elimination of \$17.5 million to help students and teachers use technology.



Rep. Cardin joins children from the Towson YMCA Day Care Center, which provides licensed day care and pre-school for 300 families. The Congressman announced \$100,000 in new funding to help renovate the center.

TRADE: STANDING UP FOR AMERICAN WORKERS AND BUSINESSES

TRADE is the backbone of the U.S. economy. We export more than \$1 trillion in goods and services each year to consumers in other nations. But we import even more from other countries. Today, Americans are buying more and more products from foreign competitors, while U.S. products are being shut out of foreign markets.

In recent years, the U.S. trade deficit has skyrocketed to record levels. In 2005, the trade deficit was a whopping \$724 billion, 17% higher than the previous year's \$618 billion deficit.

Our soaring trade deficit makes us vulnerable because it means more and more U.S. assets must be sold to finance our debt, leading to the accumulation of danger-

ously high levels of U.S. debt to foreign countries. In fact, the United States has accumulated more debt to foreigners -- \$1.2 trillion -- during the last five years than during the first 220 years of our nation's history.

We cannot let these trends continue. We need an aggressive U.S. trade policy that stands up for American workers, farmers and businesses. Our trade policy must promote free trade, economic growth and a level playing field. To accomplish that goal, we need to use all the tools at our disposal to pry open foreign markets, enforce intellectual property rights and ensure that China, Russia, the European Union and other countries abide by fair and equitable trading laws.

That is not happening today. China is a case study of what is wrong. While it's in our national interest to establish a long-term, stable trading relationship with China. China continues to undervalue its currency so that it is able to undersell U.S. products. China also unfairly subsidizes many of its industries and fails to protect intellectual property, all in violation of current trade agreements.

Rep. Cardin is joined by Leo W. Gerard, President of the United Steelworkers, at a press conference as he introduces **The Restoring America's Competitiveness Act** to overhaul U.S. trade laws.



I have introduced the **Fair Trade with China Act**, HR 3306, to address Chinese violations of World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, so that we can put an end to China's unfair trading practices.

As the senior Democrat on the House Trade Subcommittee, I also recently introduced **The Restoring America's Competitiveness Act**, HR 5043, to defend our rights before the WTO. It would direct the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to use existing WTO rules to end discriminatory practices that hurt American companies.

In addition, I have introduced the **Stand Up for America Act**, HR 4733, to help chart a new course for U.S. trade: one that promotes American jobs and helps American businesses and farmers compete globally. This measure would create a **Trade Enforcer** to promote the rights of American workers and businesses and to aggressively enforce U.S. rights under existing trade agreements.

I BELIEVE in expanded trade -- it can be an enormous benefit to the entire world. But I do not believe in allowing our trading partners to take advantage of us.

We have all seen what has happened to the U.S. steel industry. Once one of our most vital national industries, we were not aggressive enough in stopping the unfair dumping of surplus foreign-made steel on the U.S. market. The U.S. steel industry has paid a heavy price in lost jobs, reduced retirement benefits and increased bankruptcies.

U.S. trade policy can -- and should -- promote both growth and greater economic opportunities for all Americans. A vital part of shaping globalization is to ensure that international trade is a two-way street.



Rep. Cardin reviews cargo inspection at the Port of Baltimore with officials from Customs & Border Protection Agency. He is the senior Democrat on the House Trade Subcommittee, which oversees Customs.

HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO A HIGHER STANDARD

I served on the **House Ethics Committee** from 1991 to 1997, during the House Banking scandal and the Newt Gingrich sanctions. In 1998, I also chaired the **Maryland Special Study Commission on Maryland Public Ethics Law**. The American people have lost confidence in the moral and ethical way business is conducted in Washington, and I don't blame them.

We all have a right to a government that works and that represents us. Public officials hold a sacred trust and they must set a higher standard of integrity. Congress must enact stricter ethics standards and enforce them so there is no question as to what is permissible and what is not. We must hold public officials accountable and punish those who transgress.

I have called for a change in House ethics rules to allow outside groups to file ethics complaints against Members of Congress. We should not tolerate limits on who can bring an ethics complaint. We need to open up the process.



Rep. Cardin meets with students following his talk at the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies on the need for congressional ethics reform.

Rep. Cardin's...

• **Washington Office**

2207 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-4016
E-mail: rep.cardin@mail.house.gov
Web site: www.cardin.house.gov

• **District Office**

600 Wyndhurst Ave., Suite 230
Baltimore, MD 21210
410-433-8886

• **Annapolis Outreach Office**

Mondays, 9 a.m. - noon, or by appointment
44 Calvert St., Suite 349
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-974-9703

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business

M.C.
PRSRT STD
ECRWSS

POSTAL PATRON - LOCAL
3rd Congressional District
Maryland



Congressman Ben Cardin's

2006 Questionnaire

Every year I send an annual questionnaire to help keep me informed about your views on important issues before Congress. I hope you will take a moment to fill it out. For those who would like to respond through the Internet, you can go to my website – www.cardin.house.gov – and enter your answers. If you would prefer to fill out this form, please refold as indicated with the return address facing out, seal with a piece of tape at the bottom and mail with a 39-cent stamp.

1) *Would you support a phased withdraw of U.S. forces from Iraq?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

2) *Would you support the deployment of a U.N. peacekeeping force to stop the genocide in Sudan?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

3) *Would you support comprehensive immigration reform that protects our borders while increasing legal immigration through an expedited visa and citizenship process?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

4) *Has the federal government done enough to assist in the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

5) *Would you support a national law that requires all Americans to have health care insurance?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

6) *Public school enrollment is up yet the current budget proposal calls for \$15.4 billion less in funding than promised by the **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)**. Do you support increased funding for public education that would meet the funding commitments of the NCLB law?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

7) *Do you support making college more affordable for working families by cutting the interest rates on student loans in half this year-from 6.8% to 3.4%?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

For Questionnaire Results

*If you would like to get the results to this questionnaire by e-mail,
please sign up for my E-Newsletter*

Name: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

8) *The Medicare Part D drug program prohibits the federal government from negotiating with pharmaceutical companies for lower drug prices. Should that be changed to allow the government to negotiate lower drug prices?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

9) *Would you support reducing tax cuts as a way to deal with our more than \$550 billion budget deficit?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

10) *Should the Federal Aviation Administration continue to ban all cell phone use on airline flights?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

11) *Would you support requiring every container coming into the U.S. from abroad to be screened for weapons of mass destruction before leaving foreign ports?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

12) *Do you believe that global warming is a real threat to the world's environment?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

13) *Should the federal government encourage the development of a new generation of nuclear power plants to help address our nation's energy needs?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

14) *Would you support legislation to give the federal and state governments more authority to prosecute energy-price gouging?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

15) *Should Congress permit outside watchdog groups to file ethics complaints against Members of Congress?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

16) *Do you support construction of additional lanes for the Baltimore Beltway that would require payment of a toll for use?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

PLACE
39-CENT
STAMP
HERE

CONGRESSMAN BEN CARDIN
600 WYNDHURST AVE., STE. 230
BALTIMORE MD 21210-2449



IMPORTANT QUESTIONNAIRE